

Cheetahs of the Serengeti Plains: Group Living in an Asocial Species (Wildlife Behavior and Ecology series)

Tim Caro

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Cheetahs of the Serengeti Plains is the most comprehensive account of carnivore social behavior to date. Synthesizing more than a decade of research in the wild, this book offers a detailed account of the behavior and ecology of cheetahs. Compared with other large cats, and other mammals, cheetahs have an unusual breeding system; whereas lions live in prides and tigers are solitary, some cheetahs live in groups while others live by themselves. Tim Caro explores group and solitary living among cheetahs and discovers that the causes of social behavior vary dramatically, even within a single species.

Why do cheetah cubs stay with their mother for a full year after weaning? Why do adolescents remain in groups? Why do adult males live in permanent associations with each other? Why do adult females live alone? Through observations on the costs and benefits of group living, Caro offers new insight into the complex behavior of this extraordinary species. For example, contrary to common belief about cooperative hunting in large carnivores, he shows that neither adolescents nor adult males benefit from hunting in groups.

With many surprising findings, and through comparisons with other cat species, Caro enriches our understanding of the evolution of social behavior and offers new perspectives on conservation efforts to save this charismatic and endangered carnivore.



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